

Wheels and Heels – July 2005

Email news from MoDOT Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator, Caryn Giarratano

Greetings Windbenders,

Change is rippling through our state. MoDOT Director Pete Rahn is charging in a new direction with new policies and a new organizational structure (plus a new strategic plan that includes tangible results. See ... http://www.modot.state.mo.us/about/general_info/strategicplan.htm).

Our new focus is Practical Design (to request a copy of the explanation booklet, email debbie.trusley@modot.mo.gov). This calls for a change in design and construction to make better use of our funds. All ten MoDOT districts have been asked to cut ten percent from their project totals to allow more projects to be built. This reduction in scope of projects **does not** mean cutting bicycle and pedestrian accommodations from the projects (though they may need to be scaled back). What it **does** mean is that some projects must go on a *road diet*. Examples of road diets may include reducing a planned four-lane road to a three-lane or a planned ten-foot shoulder to a six-foot. Design engineers are asked to create bridges that are *context-sensitive* (built for a particular location) rather than taking a page out of the Standard Plans.

The state legislature passed new bicycle safety statutes (see more below under Missouri Happenings). The new federal transportation bill has passed with a requirement for a DOT-housed Safe Routes to School program and a \$25 million earmark to Columbia for a bicycle and pedestrian pilot program to create a transportation network (see more below under National News).

The annual Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator's Meeting in July left me astonished and recharged by the other states' innovative programs. Upon my return, I began to focus on how to elevate the importance of the BP program in Missouri. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee has been writing a *Strategic Plan for Missouri Bicyclists and Pedestrians*. I was recently directed to pursue the creation of a state bicycle map based on traffic volume and paved shoulders. My time out of the office has increased as I promote bicycling and walking in the state by speaking at bicycle club meetings, conferences and other meetings for BP-related activities. I sit on the planning committees for Speaker of the House Rod Jetton's Fitness Challenge, the MS 150 ride from Midway and the Missouri Trail Summit.

Discussions with legislators, MoDOT folks and local bicyclists regarding how to improve bicycle accommodations on the TransAmerica Trail (the national east-west on-road bike route that crosses southern Missouri) have begun. The phone has been ringing often from people seeking the best way to overcome barriers to BP travel such as interstates, rivers and railroads.

The National Highway Institute class MoDOT hosted in May on bicycle and pedestrian facility design and taught by nationally recognized bicyclists and design engineers Bruce Landis and Theo Petritsch was an amazing success.

Bicycle advocates across the state are showing interest in connectivity for BP in many projects ... including bridge access over the river at Jefferson City to connect the Katy Trail to lodging and restaurants, connecting the Katy Trail to Kansas City, bridge access over the river at Kansas City, new bicycle route signage policies in St. Louis to showcase Bike St. Louis and providing bicycle/transit connections in Springfield.

MISSOURI HAPPENINGS

Bike Legislation - The bicycle safety legislation sponsored by the Missouri Bicycle Federation passed and was signed into law by the governor in July. The bill contained the following points: motorists shall leave a safe distance when overtaking bicyclists; bicycle lane regulations; updated definition of bicycle to include

tricycles and quadracycles; regulation of shoulder use by bicyclists; allowance for the use of the right arm to signal a right turn and permission to not give signals continuously. See ... SB372 at <http://www.senate.mo.gov/05info/billtext/tat/SB372.htm> or HB487 at <http://www.house.state.mo.us/bills051/biltxt/truly/HB0487T.HTM>

NATIONAL NEWS

SAFETEA-LU Passes – The federal transportation bill (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act-Legacy for Users) affects bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. The final bill was funded at \$286.4 billion through FY 2009. Preliminary funding information indicates that Missouri should receive an annual average highway apportionment of \$862 million as compared to \$662 million under TEA-21.

Highway Safety Improvement Program - The states will be required to develop a safety plan, with input from local officials to identify the state's safety priorities and funding needs. It strengthens three existing programs of importance to bicycling: Transportation Enhancements (\$3.5 billion), Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality [CMAQ] (\$8.6 billion) and Recreational Trails (\$370 million - \$100 million more than last time).

Safe Routes to School - The SRTS program received \$612 million for fiscal years 05-09. Funding apportionments to state DOTs will be based on the proportion of the state's number of children in primary and middle schools (K-8) to the total number of such students for of all states combined. The legislative language calls for a full time SRTS coordinator in the state DOT and the funding for this position is to come from the portion of the state's SRTS funding for infrastructure projects. Since the SRTS language is in Title 1 of the legislation, it is expected that the Federal Highway Administration will administer it. See ... www.americabikes.org or www.bikeleague.org or www.transact.org.

Nonmotorized Pilot Program – The language named four localities to receive funding: Columbia, MO; Sheboygan County, WI; Marin County, CA; and Minneapolis, MN. Total funding for fiscal years 06-09 is \$100,000,000. Shift in mode share, congestion reduction, energy use, frequency of bicycling and walking, better health and a cleaner environment are to be measured and reported. <http://www.house.gov/rules/109textTEALU.htm> (go to Title I, Subsection D to H, then see page 25 for Safe Routes to School, page 40 for BP Safety Grants and page 116 to see the Columbia earmark).

Energy Bill - The energy bill that Congress recently passed included a Conserve by Bicycle program with \$6.25 million to study the impact of promotion and education programs on getting people to bicycle instead of drive, and it calls for up to ten pilot communities in which to study this. The USDOT will ask for applications for this money. Get ready to apply!

Rec Trails - Funding for the Recreational Trails Program was increase to a total of \$370 million over fiscal years 05-09. A few technical changes were included in the legislative language; for example, state rec trails advisory committees may no longer waive the requirement to spend 30 percent of the state's funds on motorized and 30 percent of funds on nonmotorized projects.

Bike Friendly Community Awards - The deadline to apply for bicycle friendly community status was August 19. This program, which is supported by generous grants from Bikes Belong, evaluates communities on five criteria. League reviewers and local advocates extensively analyze a community's efforts in education, enforcement, engineering, encouragement and evaluation. See ... <http://www.bicyclefriendlycommunity.org/index.htm>.

Bikes Belong Grants Program - Since 1999, this program has awarded nearly \$860,000 in grants, leveraging more than \$436 million in federal, state and private funding. The facilities projects have helped build more than 1,000 miles of bike paths and link nearly 5,000 miles of trails. The next deadlines are the end of August and November. See ... <http://bikesbelong.org/site/intro.cfm>.

Share the Road License Plates – Several states are now selling Share the Road with Bicycles license plates to help fund the state bicycle and pedestrian program. See ... www.ohiobike.org, www.biketexas.org/share_the_road.html, www.bikeflorida.org/sharetheroadspecialtytags/license_plate.htm, <http://www.oklahomabicyclecoalition.com/Tag/srt5.pdf>, <http://www.ncdot.org/transit/bicycle/>, www.scdmvonline.com/VehPlateSpecialty.aspx and www.bikewalkvirginia.org/.

EDUCATION and SAFETY

Bike-related Fatalities rose in 2004 by 15 Percent - The National Center for Statistics and Analysis has published the August 2005 Traffic Analysis newsletter. Included in this report are the number of people killed in motorized vehicle crashes by state for 2003 and 2004 and national totals for bicyclist and pedestrian fatalities. See ... <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/pdf/nrd-30/NCSA/RNotes/2005/809897.pdf>.

Bike Safety Books Here – MoDOT offers free bicycle and pedestrian safety materials that include *Bicycle Safety Tips*, *Pedestrian and Bus Safety Tips*, *From A to Z by Bike*, *About Pedestrian Safety* and *Protecting Your Child's Head*. Email Susan Roark at susan.roark@modot.mo.gov.

State Statutes Regarding Bike/Ped – A collection of Missouri State Statutes regarding pedestrians or regarding bicyclists are available by contacting Caryn Giarratano. The Statutes regarding bicycles were updated this month.

Physical Exercise Can Boost Brain - Simply walking sedately for half an hour three times a week can improve abilities such as learning, concentration and abstract reasoning by 15 percent. The effects are particularly noticeable in older people. Senior citizens who walk regularly perform better on memory tests than their sedentary peers. Schoolchildren who exercise three or four times a week get higher than average exam grades at age 10 or 11. The effect is strongest in boys. See ... <http://tinyurl.com/7vkxu>.

Two Million More Bikes – The Outdoor Recreation Participation Study found that 79.1 million Americans rode a bike on a paved road in 2004, as compared with 77.8 million in 2003. See ... <http://www.outdoorindustry.org/pdf/bike.pdf>.

Street Smarts – John Allen's bicycle manual is available. This textbook-style bicycle driver handbook has been adopted by several states as an official guide, similar to the Driver Guide for motorists. See ... <http://www.bikexpert.com/streetsmarts/usa/index.htm>.

More Peds Means Increased Safety – A study by the University of California - Berkeley Traffic Safety Center has found that the more pedestrians on the street, the greater the safety for walkers. See ... <http://www.tsc.berkeley.edu/html/newsletter/Spring04/syntax.html>.

Does the Built Environment Influence Physical Activity? - This Transportation Research Board Special Report #282 reviews the relationships among physical activity, health, transportation and land use. See ... http://trb.org/news/blurbs_detail.asp?id=4536.

Lose Weight by Walking Slowly - Leisurely walking for distance combined with low-impact cardiovascular activity appears to be the best formula for obese people seeking to get into shape and stay healthy, according

to a University of Colorado at Boulder study. The results show that people who walk a mile at a leisurely pace burn more calories than if they walk a mile at their normal pace. See ... <http://tinyurl.com/dtk9>.

OTHER NEWS

New Study on Effects of Gas Prices - The Surface Transportation Policy Project (STPP) and the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) released a study entitled, "Driven to Spend: Pumping Dollars out of Our Households and Communities," which shows that families are paying a high price to meet their transportation needs and families in areas with fewer transportation choices carry even greater burdens.

Key findings from this study:

- * Households in regions that have invested in public transportation reap financial benefits from having affordable transportation options, even as gasoline prices rise.
- * Low-income families are unduly impacted by higher transportation costs since transportation expenditures claim a higher percentage of their family budgets.
- * For the first time, the study analyzed the effects of gasoline price hikes and ranked areas by the jump in household expenditures due gas prices. See ... <http://www.transact.org/>.

Notable Quote – “I have a favorite saying about transportation: If you plan cities for cars and traffic, you get cars and traffic. If you plan for people and places, you get people and places.” Fred Kent, Project for Public Spaces. See ... <http://tinyurl.com/9vxz2>.

WEB SITE LINKS

Bike magnets for motorized vehicles ... <http://supportcycling.com/>
Complete the Streets information ... <http://www.completethestreets.org/>

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Adventure Cycling ... <http://www.adventurecycling.org>
American Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals ... <http://www.apbp.org/>
Bikes Belong Coalition ... <http://www.bikesbelong.org>
Channing-Bete Company ... www.channing-bete.com
Columbia PedNet Coalition ... <http://www.pednet.org>
Institute of Transportation Engineers ... <http://www.ite.org/>
League of American Bicyclists ... <http://www.bikeleague.org>, bill@bikeleague.org
Missouri Bicycle Federation ... www.mobikefed.org, brent@brenthugh.com
National Center for Bicycling & Walking ... <http://www.bikewalk.org>, info@bikewalk.org
Rails to Trails Conservancy ... <http://www.railtrails.org/>, membership@railtrails.org
Traffic Safety Center ... <http://www.tsc.berkeley.edu/>
Transportation Research Board ... <http://www.trb.org>, rhouston@nas.edu
Victoria Transport Policy Institute ... litman@vtpi.org, <http://www.vtpi.org>

CALENDAR

August 26 to 28 - Thunderhead Complete Streets Training, Decatur, GA. See ... <http://www.thunderheadalliance.org/trainings05.htm>.

September 10 to 11 – MS 150 Bicycle Tour from Midway. See ... <http://www.nationalmssociety.org/MSBike-Missouri.asp>

September 17 – the Tour of the Ozarks to benefit the Diabetes Education Fund. Route choices include 12, 25, 50 and 100 in Rolla. Call 573-364-1695 or see ... www.touroftheozarks.org.

October 5 - Walk to School Day. International Walk to School Week is October 3-7. See ... <http://www.walktoschool-usa.org/> or www.walktoschool.org.

October 15, 2005 – Ride Bike MO, a bike tour of Callaway County from the Holts Summit and Fulton, MO, area in mid-Missouri. This ride will offer route choices 35-100 miles and will benefit Missouri bicycle advocacy. See ... <http://www.mobikefed.org>.

October 27-29 – Missouri Trail Summit, Stoney Creek Inn, Columbia. Paula Diller, 573-636-3828. See ... www.mopark.org.

May 17, 2006 – Ride of Silence at 7 pm to honor bicyclists who were killed or injured while riding on the road. See www.rideofsilence.org.

Please forward this newsletter to anyone you feel may be interested. If you are not on the mailing list and would like to be added, tell me!

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